GADGETS

How To Steal an Election With a Diebold Machine

Jason Chen
9/14/06 4:50PM

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Some Princeton researchers made a demonstration video of how it's possible to steal an election with a Diebold voting machine in under a minute. Anyone with physical access to the machine can put in malicious software to steal votes—such as election workers who have unsupervised access to the machines before elections. All they have to do is open up the machine with a key (or pick the lock), remove the old memory card, stick in your own memory card, boot the machine, and it automatically installs any software that was on the memory card.

At the end of the demonstration election, the poll machine prints out the incorrect "stolen election" result. The internal memory card also stores in the incorrect result. Every piece of evidence of how the election actually went reflects the "wrong" result. And, after the election is over, the vote stealing software can delete itself. There's no evidence left that the vote has been conducted incorrectly.

There's even a flaw in Diebold machines that allow a virus to spread from machine to machine, infecting a memory card and using it to spread to other machines.

Security Analysis of the Diebold AccuVote-TS Voting Machine
[itpolicy.princeton.edu via Digg]

DISCUSSION

gracemoon
10/31/06 8:12PM

I agree with the following:

pietrohome says:

I am 26 year veteran IT - programmer- sys designer. I knew from the start there is no secure way of creating a self contained digital voting computer. The only way a digital voting system can be employed is if it is designed as client server type of application with pgp style encryption to ensure votes transmitted are counted correctly and securely and then they need to be counted by several counting applications. When the voter enters the booth and sticks in his or her card, a pgp key is created and the vote can get securely cast. So in a sense you are literally broadcasting each vote where its gets counted by several systems which allows a method for error checking. In this scenario an election can also be monitored as it progresses eliminating the need for

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